

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The road from Lynghat to Dawki has been completed in all respects; the other three roads are yet to be completed.

(b) and (c). The original sanction was for a consolidated amount of Rs. 20 crores. The expenditure incurred upto January, 1992 is about Rs. 21.5 crores.

(d) The Govt. of Meghalaya entrusted the construction, improvement and maintenance of these four roads for the BRDB, subject to the following condition;—

- (i) The improvement/construction of the roads shall also include bridges and culverts.
- (ii) Maintenance costs of the roads would be borne by BRDB during the construction period.
- (iii) Local Casual Labourers will be employed by BRO to the maximum extent.
- (iv) Subject to other conditions being equal, preference will be given to local contractors while awarding the works.
- (v) An Executive Engineer of Meghalaya Govt. will be engaged by the BRO for liason work.

Naval Armament Depot

3829. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for the development of Naval Armament Depot. Cochin; and

(b) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

Extension of Banking Services in North-Eastern Region

3830. KUMARI UMA BHARTI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering any action plan for extending banking services in the north eastern region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c). Under the 1985-90 branch licensing policy 569 centres were allotted to different banks for opening branches in North Eastern region. Of these, the banks have opened 349 branches and 220 licences are pending. Since the non-opening of branches at the allotted centres will result in the continuance of the spatial gap in banking facilities, the validity period of licences pending has been extended upto 31.3.1992. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up a Task Force at its Regional Office at Guwahati to monitor the progress of the utilisation of pending licences. Requests for substitution of centres are being entertained by RBI for those centres where the State Government is not in a position to provide infrastructural facilities in the near future. Under the extant licensing Policy (1990-95), RBI has allotted 26 localities in urban areas for opening branches in North Eastern States. Regarding semi-urban centres, RBI had advised the banks to submit their consolidated proposals for opening of branches during the period 1990-91 to 1992-93. The proposals have